IT'S YOUR CHOICE!

A Model for Decision-Making in Local Government

A. Donald Smeltzer
Ken Simpson

MMTDB 1991

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Introduction

Sound decision-making is a difficult and demanding exercise, but one that is fundamental to an effective system of local government. This handbook is concerned with the mechanics of sound decision-making and is intended to be used as an information resource for municipal officials, both elected and appointed. Its content is presented in an interesting format and is intended to challenge readers to examine the workings of their own municipal units and, where appropriate, to encourage change.

A vital part of council's mandate is to make decisions which establish direction for the municipality. Implementing these decisions is a primary function of the municipal bureaucracy. *It's Your Choice!* will help elected and appointed officials obtain a better understanding of their respective roles in the decision-making process.

In addition to identifying and discussing six important steps which lead to sound decision-making, *It's Your Choice!* presents a case study which illustrates two alternative methods of reaching decisions. The case is based on the fictitious Town of Mission Hill and is offered for your review. Part way through the case, you will be presented with three questions to consider. As you review these questions, reflect upon the manner in which decisions are made in your own municipality.

Section V of this handbook contains examples of several forms and documents which have been developed for the Town of Mission Hill:

- Action Memo
- Format for Press Release
- Form for the Submission of Bylaws to Provincial Authority for Approval
- Guidelines for the Preparation of Staff or Committee Reports
- Town Policy Concerning the Hiring of Students for Summer Employment
- Questions for Town Councillors and Senior Staff to Consider when Making Decisions Concerning Municipal Programs

You may find these examples useful in your own municipal unit. You are urged to consider what additional kinds of resources may be helpful to your municipal organization and to take the necessary steps which will result in their acquisition or development.

Section I

Roles and Responsibilities

Roles and Responsibilities in the Decision-Making Process

The ultimate local government decision-makers in any municipality are those individuals who are elected to serve on the municipal council. While it is normal for members of council to have particular constituent concerns, the council itself is expected to make decisions which are in the best interest of the entire community. Although council has a fundamental role in setting policy, its members normally are not expected to become involved in the day-to-day administration of each department. This latter function should be carried out by staff who are employed by the municipality for this purpose. Council does need, however, as a policy-making body, to develop mechanisms to ensure that staff are carrying out its directives. The development of clear, concise policy statements, which are adopted by council, helps to encourage an understanding of the separation of authority and of responsibility between the elected policy makers and the appointed branch of local government.*

In summary, elected officials are on council to set policy direction - not to be drawn into administrative operations which are the responsibility of appointed officials. It should be kept in mind, however, that there is an ongoing need for council to be assured that its policies are being properly implemented. Employees should not only be given responsibility and authority to perform their administrative and management tasks, they should also be held accountable for their actions.

* How-to Manual on Policy Development
Alberta Department of Municipal Affairs

Roles and Responsibilities of Council

Roles and responsibilities of council include:

- Establishing the direction of the municipality;
- Approving budgeted allocations;
- Providing leadership;
- Setting tax rates;
- Establishing priorities;
- Ensuring residents are provided with an appropriate mix of services;
- Approving policies;
- Approving the operating structure for the municipality;
- Staffing the organization;
- Adopting bylaws, resolutions, and policies;
- Maintaining good public relations;
- Evaluating senior management;
- Ensuring that municipal employees are provided with competitive salaries and benefits; and
- Correcting organizational deficiencies.

Roles and Responsibilities of Senior Staff

Roles and responsibilities of senior staff include:

- Understanding and appreciating the democratic system;
- Understanding and appreciating the management function;
- Acting as a resource to council and providing advice;
- Implementing and administering approved policies of council;
- Informing council and its boards and committees of possible options, alternatives, and implications;
- Managing the organization; undertaking day-to-day tasks;
- Providing leadership in short- and long-range planning;
- Managing personnel;
- Providing appropriate leadership to staff; praising, correcting, and rewarding;
- Ensuring staff development;
- Managing fiscal resources;
- Communicating effectively;

Roles and responsibilities of senior staff ...continued

- Preparing draft policies, programs, and budgets;
- Responding to public enquiries; advising on policies;
- Maintaining up-to-date knowledge of new developments; and
- Evaluating policies, programs, and staff.

Section II

The Case Study

Having identified important roles and responsibilities which are part of the decision-making process in local government, a case study in decision-making is provided for review. As you read this case, reflect upon the manner in which decisions are made in your own municipality.

All in Favour?

It was 10:55 PM when Mayor Edmund White had last glanced at the small, oval-shaped clock which hung, slightly off-centre, on the far wall of the Mission Hill Council Chambers. From his elevated position, Mayor White could see the clock clearly. He was aware, however, that its view for many of the Councillors was obscured because of the ornately carved wooden border which protruded like a pouting lip just below where the clock was located. Doors to the large, under-utilized storage area lined the left side of the Council chamber. *One day I am going to do something about this place,* Mayor White thought to himself, *and I'm going to get a clock which can be seen by all Council members. Perhaps then, Council meetings will get over sooner.* A fly buzzed around the Mayor's papers and busied itself beside his glass of water. Swat!

The day had been long and the high level of humidity had not helped. There was more moving about than normal and three of the nine Council members had already excused themselves from the meeting. *A fan would be a great help in this room,* the Mayor found himself thinking. *No -- air conditioning is what we need! Perhaps the whole Council Chamber should be given a long, hard look and the facilities upgraded.* Even his chair seemed a little bit harder than usual on this warm, humid June night.

"Your Worship, may I speak on the subject of our summer employment program?"

"Yes, Councillor Murdoch, you have the floor."

Sam Murdoch was a relative newcomer to Council but, in the two years since he had been elected, he had become one of the stronger voices among his colleagues. If it was good for the Town, Sam Murdoch was for it. His stature was somewhat imposing and he could be very persistent when he was committed to a particular course of action.

"Mr. Mayor, we all know how difficult it is for our young people to obtain summer employment and, given the current economic climate, it's going to get worse. I believe it's time that this Council took some positive action to ensure that employment opportunities are provided to the children of those who pay taxes and live here. I want to see our young people looked after. I understand that, this last year, approximately 25 per cent of this Town's summer employee workforce came from our neighbouring municipality. Now I believe in cooperation, but I think we have to look after our own first. With your permission, Sir, I wish to make a motion that it be the policy of the Municipality of Mission Hill that the hiring of all summer and part-time employees be restricted to individuals who are permanent residents of this municipality."

"I'll second that motion, Your Worship." John MacMichael always seconded Councillor Murdoch's motions.

So, that's what those two were talking about in the Committee Room when I came in, the Mayor thought to himself.

"A motion has been made and seconded that the Municipality of Mission Hill adopt a policy that limits summer and part-time positions in the employ of the Town to permanent residents of Mission Hill. You have all heard the motion. Is there any discussion? Councillor LeBlanc, you have the floor."

"Thank you, Your Worship. I would like to know what the Town Administrator thinks of such a policy. Has this been discussed with our Administrator?"

"Your Worship," Councillor Murdoch offered, "I discussed this with our Town Administrator three weeks ago and he advised me that he thought it was a good idea. Isn't that so, Alan?"

Alan Moore had been Town Administrator for almost six years now. He managed a forced smile but appeared uncertain exactly how to respond. He leaned over to the Mayor and whispered a few words before proceeding.

"Councillor Murdoch did speak to me several weeks ago about such a motion and, at the time, it sounded reasonable. There is certainly merit in doing all we can to help our residents obtain employment. However, I am not sure if we are contravening any provincial statutes by adopting such a policy and, personally, I think we should do a little more research on this before we make it a policy. But, of course, it's the Council's prerogative to take whatever action it wishes."

"Your Worship and members of Council," it was Councillor O'Neil's turn to speak, "as Chairman of the Parks and Recreation Commission, I would like to point out that we are going to be advertising next week for the hiring of summer employees under the Student Employment Program. I'm not even sure what the Town's current policy is. In any event, if we are going to be doing things differently from previous years, the Commission will need to know very soon. Personally, under normal circumstances, I would not be in favour of limiting employment opportunities. However, these are difficult economic times and I think I could justify such a move."

As she sat down, Councillor O'Neil expressed the hope that the evening's agenda would soon be concluded as the hour was getting late. Mayor White noted the clock on the far wall now indicated it was 11:15 PM.

"Yes, Councillor Reid, you may have the floor."

"Your Worship, we don't have time to do a lot of research. With all due respect, Sir, if the Town Administrator felt more research was needed, he should have done it before this meeting. Councillor Murdoch indicated last week that he was going to raise this matter at a future meeting. I think we should pass this motion and deal with any policy problems that may arise later on. I call for the question."

Mayor White glanced at each Councillor. "Are there any other members of Council who wish to speak to this motion? Hearing none, I will call for the vote. All those in favour, signify by saying aye. Those opposed, nay."

The Mayor looked a little concerned. "Councillors, we have a new policy in this Town but, now that it has been passed, I must say for the record that I have some hesitation about rushing a policy decision through in this manner."

One hour later, the regular mid-June meeting of Council adjourned.

Summer passed somewhat uneventfully in Mission Hill. Except for the normal round of meetings, reports, and the juggling of vacations, all in all, it had been a very good three months. Alan Moore sat back in his chair, content in his knowledge that Mission Hill was a well-run municipality. In just three hours,

he would be leaving on his regular two-week fall trip to the cottage and the day-to-day municipal details would be out of his mind. The peacefulness of his day, however, was broken by the voice of his secretary.

"Mr. Moore, the Mayor just called. He is not in a good mood and wanted you to know he is on his way over to your office. Evidently, the Town has just been served notice that it is being faced with a major lawsuit for discriminatory practices. I think it has to do with that policy on hiring that was passed in June. Good luck with your meeting -- the Mayor does not sound happy!"

Questions for Consideration

1. Was sufficient research put into the development of a policy on the hiring of students for summer employment?

2. Can you personally relate this kind of decision-making to your own municipality?

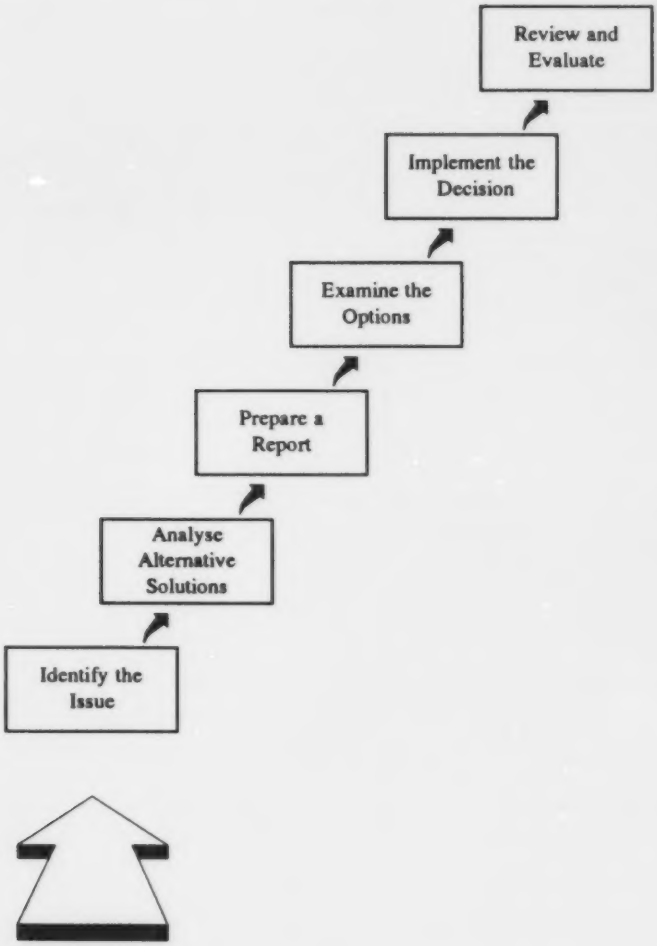
3. What can be done to improve the Mission Hill decision-making process?

Section III

The Model

Faced with today's growing demands, and yet possessing limited financial and personnel resources, municipalities are becoming more and more concerned with methods and techniques appropriate for municipal decision-making. This section outlines a series of six steps for municipal decision-making. When followed, this approach will result in a decision or municipal policy which has been well thought out and which has benefited from the collective input of both councillors and staff.

Six Steps to Sound Decision-Making



Step One:

Identify the Issue

The municipal council acts as a decision-making body for the effective operation of the municipal unit. Potential problems and concerns may be identified by individual councillors, staff members, interest groups, or the general public. **Recognizing or identifying an important issue which requires a decision is the first step in the decision-making process.** When examining matters which are brought before council or committees, there are a number of questions which should be considered.

Consider These Questions

1. What is the issue?

2. Has council dealt with this matter in the past? If so, how was it resolved?

3. Is the issue a matter which should be dealt with by council?

4. Should no action be taken or should the matter be referred to a committee, staff, or an outside body for further study and recommendation?

5. Does council have the legal authority to deal with this issue?

Step Two:

Analyse Alternative Solutions

Once an issue has been identified and council has agreed to deal with the matter, effort must be put into determining possible solutions and fully assessing the consequences of each alternative action. This research function is best delegated by council to senior staff or to a committee.

Consider These Questions

1. How has this issue been dealt with in other municipalities?
2. What alternatives or solutions are appropriate?
3. What are the political implications of each alternative?
4. What are the legal implication of each alternative?
5. What are the financial implications of each alternative?
6. What are the social and economic implications of each alternative?
7. Are there any staffing implications involved in each specific alternative?
8. What is the timetable for action?

Step Three:

Prepare a Report

Once all the background research has been completed, in most situations, a clear and concise written report should be submitted to council or the appropriate committee for consideration. Reports should be prepared using a standard format. Such actions will assist in making sound decisions.

Suggested Report Format

Reports should contain the following information:

- A title which clearly reflects the issue under consideration;
- The name of the individual, department, or organization submitting the report;
- Date of submission;
- A short introduction containing the facts and background information;
- A summary of the current situation;
- An outline of the alternatives with a brief description of the consequences of pursuing each alternative;
- A final recommendation;
- Appropriate signatures;
- Appendices containing relevant information; and
- An executive overview for any report over four pages in length.

Step Four:

Examine the Options

The end product of the process of research and review, as articulated in the written report, is presented to the decision-making body for consideration. The entire report, particularly the options and implications, should be carefully examined.

Consider These Questions

1. Is the information clearly presented?
2. Are there additional options which should be considered?
3. Is the recommended option acceptable?
4. Have the financial, legal, staffing and other implications of each option been thoroughly explored?
5. How will the recommended option impact upon the municipality's long-term objectives?
6. Is further review of the matter required?

Step Five:

Implement the Decision

Senior staff members are, or should be, knowledgeable and trained in the art of management and administration. They are charged with the responsibility for implementing decisions of council and must carry out council decisions, regardless of personal views.

Consider These Questions

1. Do I fully understand the intent of council's decision?

2. Who should be made aware of council's decision (i.e. staff, committees, citizens' groups, general public, press)?

3. What procedures should be developed to guide the implementation of this decision?

4. What resources are required to implement council's decisions?

5. What steps are involved in obtaining these resources?

6. What tasks should be delegated to members of staff?

Step Six:

Review and Evaluate

There is a need for council to be assured that its decisions are being implemented as agreed and that the approved decisions remain relevant, given changes which may have occurred in the municipal environment. As a result, senior staff should periodically report to council any problems which may have arisen or are foreseen as a result of a particular decision. The effect of the decision should be compared with the original intent.

Consider These Questions

1. What has been the reaction to the decision?

2. Is the original decision still valid given the current operational environment?

3. Should the procedures for implementation be altered?

Section IV

The Case Study Continued

Mission Hill -- Two Years Later

This really is a comfortable room for holding meetings, Mayor Sylvia Gleason reflected as she glanced around the newly completed Mission Hill Council Chambers. Edmund White, the previous Mayor, had the right idea when he insisted that the former, less appealing and very uncomfortable Council Chambers could benefit from a thorough refurbishing and renovation. His slogan, "A Quality Environment Begets Quality Decision-making," sounded long winded, and perhaps a bit extravagant at the time, but his determination appears to have paid off.

I regret leading the opposition on Council, Mayor Gleason reflected. *I really wasn't convinced that we should spend money improving Council facilities -- but I've changed my mind.* Fortunately, former Mayor White had been able to persuade a majority of Mission Hill's nine Councillors to his way of thinking. He repeatedly stressed that it was in the best interests of the Town to have a more comfortable facility in which to reason and to undertake the business of the Town Council.

I can see him now, Sylvia thought, *buttonholing his colleagues as they would look furtively around for a quick avenue of escape.* Seldom was there an escape route from Mayor White. "I really want your support on this one," he would say. "Do you remember when I helped you with..."

Sam Murdoch, too, had seen the benefits of improved surroundings. His support proved crucial to getting the project off the ground. Sam was no slouch. He knew that an error in judgement had occurred when Council, at his insistence, adopted the ill-advised Hiring Policy which resulted in a lawsuit against Mission Hill. While the matter had taken a lot of energy to resolve, it was eventually disposed of to the satisfaction of all parties. Nevertheless, the whole affair taught Edmund White, Sam Murdoch, and the Town Administrator an important lesson. Each resolved not to let a similar situation occur in the future.

"We need help in developing workable guidelines and a strategy for decision-making," Sam told the Mayor. "If we are going to consider a new Council Chamber, and I support you in your efforts, let's do things right! There is a lot of good material available these days on project management and decision-making. I suggest we take a long hard look at the way we have been doing things around here and design an approach to decision-making which will work in this municipality."

As Sylvia Gleason looked back on it now, the process leading up to approval to proceed with the project, and the work involved in getting it underway and completed, had been a time-consuming and sometimes frustrating experience.

- *First, the idea received lengthy discussion in Council.*

- *A Steering Committee was established to guide the project through its various stages and a full assessment of Council's needs was undertaken.*

- *Considerable care was given to the potential of additional community use for the facility.*

- *Staff of the municipality were encouraged to offer suggestions.*

- *The local press, as well as citizens' groups, were encouraged to provide further input into the planning process.*

- *A range of options, financing arrangements, "what-if" scenarios, and identifiable implications were carefully considered at each step of the process.*

On reflection, Sylvia Gleason agreed that it had certainly been worth the effort. And now, as Mayor, she and her colleagues on Council were benefiting in more ways than one from the new facilities. Even seating Alan Moore, the Town Administrator, a little distance from the Mayor's chair had paid dividends. The intermittent whisperings between Moore and the Mayor were infrequent. *He appears to have a lot*

more self-assurance than he did previously, Sylvia Gleason thought to herself. Finally, room temperatures, crowded and uncomfortable seating arrangements, and a lack of good ventilation were complaints of the past. *It's a pleasure to sit down in a comfortable upholstered chair and to engage in discussion. Not only are the new facilities greatly improved, but the quality of decision-making seems to have taken a dramatic turn for the better.* As Sylvia Gleason looked around the new horseshoe-style Council table, she felt proud to be the Mayor of Mission Hill.

Even the local press, now recipients of their own glassed-in press area, had sensed the change at Town Hall. An article in this week's issue of Mission Hill News highlighted the Town's past difficulties with the hiring of summer students, but went on to praise the Mayor and Council for the changes which were being made. The article stressed that there appeared to be a renewed sense of cooperation and commitment among Town Hall officials.

This past week, Council and staff had completed development of a new policy on hiring of summer students for Mission Hill. Tonight's Council meeting would see that draft policy given final consideration.

As Mayor Gleason waited for her colleagues to take their places around the table, she silently reviewed the

different steps of the process that Council had gone through in the development of the new policy on hiring.

- *The issue was brought up at Council and debated.*
- *A consensus was obtained among Council members that a new or revised policy on hiring practices was required.*
- *The matter was referred to staff for a thorough examination and for development of a draft policy for Council consideration.*

Staff were instructed to consider the various concerns raised by Council and to thoroughly examine the weaknesses of the present policy. Policy options Council might want to look at were requested. Financial and community concerns were carefully considered.

When the staff report was brought to Council after a period of three weeks, it was thoroughly reviewed and then sent back to staff for additional work. The result was a revised policy on the hiring of students for summer employment. The policy was brief, concise, clear, well thought out, and met the needs of Mission Hill.

The Mayor reflected with some pride that Councillors had questioned the Administrator as to the legal and

financial implications of Town Council adopting a particular option. In future, all staff recommendations coming to Council would include a listing of possible options for consideration and would also include a detailed staff assessment of the potential implications to the Town resulting from a particular option being adopted.

Mayor Gleason felt at ease with the decision-making process that had taken place. By now, all Councillors had been briefed on the proposed policy and each Department Head was fully aware of the manner in which the policy impacted upon his or her area of responsibility. In the drafting of the policy, advice of appropriate provincial officials and legal counsel had been sought. The chance of a lawsuit being filed as a result of the new policy on hiring was slim. The Town had properly done its homework. Tonight a vote would be taken.

"I would like to welcome members of the Town Council to our meeting this evening and also members of the press and visitors who are in attendance."

"Our first item of business is . . ."

Conclusion

The case study, and much of the content of this handbook, has highlighted the role of the elected official in the decision-making process of local government. Nevertheless, the suggested step-by-step approach to decision-making applies throughout the municipal organization. It is our hope that elected and appointed officials will find the publication helpful as an introductory reference to the sometimes frustrating, but always important and challenging art of decision-making in local government.

One important area of decision-making which should not be overlooked is the need for management to maintain up-to-date documentation of all council-approved policies, procedures, bylaws, and resolutions and, also, to document other decisions of council.

Administrative policies and procedures, as well as formal council policies, should be compiled and made available to every municipal councillor as part of the normal orientation and briefing process. Similarly, bylaws and resolutions should be maintained in an orderly manner and made readily available.

Staff of the municipal unit should be provided with up-to-date information on all personnel policies which

have been adopted. Each should be encouraged to acquire a thorough knowledge of any policy decision, bylaw, resolution, or other decision which in any way impacts upon or relates to a staff member's specific municipal responsibilities or employment status.

As a concluding thought to this handbook, it needs to be noted that elected officials, members of staff, and the general public have a right to know whether the municipal unit has an official policy on a particular matter or if a decision on some matter has been made and, if so, what that policy or decision is. Such information should be easily obtainable, unless there is a very good reason for its confidentiality.

Section V

Examples

Example I

Action Memo

Town of Mission Hill

Date: _____

Urgent: ☐

To: _____

From: _____

Remarks: _____

_____

_____

_____

☐ Note and file	☐ For your information
☐ Note and return to me	☐ Please comment
☐ Note and see me	☐ Prepare draft reply for my consideration
☐ Please answer	☐ Take appropriate action

Example II

Format for Press Release

For further information, contact:
Alan Moore, Town Administrator
Town of Mission Hill

May 5, 1991

For Immediate Release

Mayor Sylvia Gleason today announced that re-furbishing of the Council Chambers of the Town of Mission Hill has been completed on schedule and under budget. The improved facilities are climate-controlled and contain an expanded public gallery, as well as a special glassed-in section for the press. The Council Chambers are easily accessed by all members of the community and has been designed for additional community use. The first official meeting of Council in its new facilities will take place on May 23, 1991. In recognition of the event, Mayor Gleason, on behalf of the Town Council, invites the residents of Mission Hill to join Councillors for an open house on May 23 between the hours of 2:00 PM and 4:00 PM.

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Example III

Form for the Submission of Bylaws to Provincial Authority for Approval

Town of Mission Hill

Bylaw Number _____

This section should contain the actual wording of the bylaw as agreed by motion/resolution of council.

Done and passed in Council this _____ day of _____, 19___ A.D.

_____
Mayor

_____
Town Administrator

I, _____, Town Administrator for the Town of Mission Hill, do certify that the foregoing is a true and current copy of Bylaw _____ of the Town of Mission Hill, duly passed by the Town Council on _____, 19___.

Effective Date: _____

Example IV

Guidelines for the Preparation of Staff or Committee Reports

Town of Mission Hill

1. Presentation Format

1.1 Reports from all departments and committees are to be presented on 8½" x 11" paper.

1.2 Supporting documents are also to be presented on 8½" x 11" paper or to be condensed on photocopy reducing machines, if possible. This practice will ensure uniform report format, easier filing and easier retrieval.

1.3 Reports which are confidential should be clearly marked on the cover page.

2. Report Content

2.1 At the top of the front page each report will contain:

- date of report
- for whom the report is prepared
- author of the report
- signature of the author
- signature of the responsible department head and/or Town Administrator

2.2 The content of each report is to be concise and consistent.

2.3 Subsequent reports on the same topic should carry the same title as the original report.

2.4 The body of the report is to include the following information:

- a short introduction providing background information;
- a summary of the current situation;
- an indication of the alternatives with a brief description of the consequences of pursuing each alternative; and
- recommendations, where appropriate.

2.5 Recommendations are to be prefaced with the underlined phrase "It is recommended that". Recommendations should be clear, concise, and cover all points necessary for Council to formulate the appropriate resolution to effect the recommended action.

2.6 All staff reports presented to Town Council, with the exception of reports exempted by special condition, i.e. Town Solicitor, are to be signed by the Town Administrator.

2.7 Reports prepared by staff for the Town Administrator's signature are to carry the name of the person preparing the report.

3. Supplementary Reports

3.1 A supplementary report will contain additional information on an item which has already been before Town Council or the Committee-of-the-Whole.

3.2 The format of supplementary reports should be the same as that of the original report.

3.3 Supplementary reports should be produced on **yellow** paper for immediate identification in the agenda packet.

4. Information Reports

4.1 An information report will contain background on a subject that is sent to the Mayor and Councillors strictly for their information to keep them up to date on a particular subject.

4.2 An information report is not indicated on any agenda.

4.3 An information report shall be clearly marked **"For Information Only"**, preceding the body of the report.

4.4 An information report should be produced on **blue** paper for immediate identification.

5. Executive Overview

5.1 All reports more than four pages in length are to be accompanied by a one-page Executive Overview which highlights the major points, implications, and recommendations contained in the report.

6. Distribution

6.1 It is the responsibility of the Town Administrator to ensure that a general distribution list for reports is prepared. The list shall include such information as:

- who receives reports:
  i.e. elected officials, department heads, media, libraries, interest groups, etc.
- when reports are to be distributed;
- if a report is considered to be confidential; and
- other appropriate information.

Example V

Town Policy Concerning the Hiring of Students for Summer Employment

Cover Page

Town of Mission Hill

Policy Number:	7-P
Scope:	All Town Departments, Boards, and Commissions
Coverage:	All positions designated for summer students
Approval Date:	Council Meeting, May 23, 1991
Effective Date:	June 1, 1991
Deadline for Review:	June 1, 1993

The Policy

Hiring of Students for Summer Employment

Purpose of Policy:

To encourage the Municipality of the Town of Mission Hill to hire, in accordance with the merit principle, the best qualified candidates for positions available to summer students.

Policy Statement:

The Municipality of the Town of Mission Hill will seek to fill all vacant summer positions designated for students on the basis of the best qualified applicant being offered the position subject, however, to the terms and conditions which are set out in the responsibilities and procedures section of this policy.

1. Responsibilities

The Municipal Council is responsible for:

1. approving a policy on the hiring of summer students;

2. in consultation with the Town Administrator, reviewing all aspects of the policy on the hiring of summer students to ensure the policy's continued relevancy, legality and effectiveness;

3. authorizing amendments to the policy which, in the view of Council, are considered appropriate; and

4. approving rates of pay for all student-designated summer positions.

The Town Administrator is responsible for:

1. ensuring, where applicable, that the Town's policy for the hiring of students for summer employment is effectively administered throughout all Departments, Boards, and Commissions of the Town; and

2. ensuring that accurate records are maintained.

Each Department, Board, or Commission Head is responsible for:

1. ensuring that the intent of the Town's policy on hiring of students for summer employment is effectively administered within the individual Department, Board or Commission; and

2. advising the Town Administrator of any problems or concerns affecting the ability of the Department, Board, or Commission to administer this policy and suggesting changes and/or amendments to the policy which are considered appropriate.

2. Advertising of Vacant Summer Positions for Students

1. Individuals having responsibility for recruiting and hiring students for summer employment may, with the approval of the Town Administrator, advertise vacant positions in the newspapers, at student employment centres, on commercial bulletin boards, and in such other manner as is considered appropriate in order to ensure, as far as possible, a community awareness of the position vacancies.

3. Rate of Pay

1. The rate of pay for each summer position will be the rate of pay which has been authorized by Council.

Example VI

Questions for Town Councillors and Senior Staff to Consider when Making Decisions Concerning Municipal Programs

Town of Mission Hill

1. What is the purpose of this program? (i.e. Define its main objective(s).)

2. Who is the program meant to serve? (e.g. seniors, single parents, school children, businessmen)

3. What social, economic, political, environmental or other factors need to be considered prior to this program's implementation?

4. Does the municipality have the legal authority to implement this program?

5. Where does the demand for this program originate?

6. Are similar programs being offered through other municipalities, by the provincial government, the schools, the universities, or by the private sector?

7. If a similar program has been implemented before, by which organization, and with what results?

8. Have the costs of the program in terms of human, material, capital, environmental, social and other factors been estimated? What are the costs? Are they firm?

9. How might this program be priorized in comparison to existing programs?

10. Have the costs versus the benefits of this particular program been carefully considered?

11. Which department would be responsible for the program?

12. Do we have the personnel, expertise, and financial and material resources to implement the program?

13. Have departments that will be affected been consulted with respect to staffing requirements, additional work load, equipment needs, and so on?

14. Will additional staff be required; if so, how many and at what salary levels?

15. Can fees for services be charged to the public? If so, what percentage of cost-recovery could be realized for this program?

16. What outside, independent sources of funding or expertise might be tapped?

17. Can funds be redirected or reallocated from any of the municipality's other programs or activities that may have demonstrated low levels of demand?

18. Are there funds that can be redirected from service or program duplication?

19. Can other municipalities that might benefit from this program contribute to its design or delivery?

20. Can a joint venture between the municipality/ community service clubs and private businesses be considered?

21. If this program is implemented, will the services or activities be made available or used by people who live in neighbouring towns or communities, but who do **not** live within this municipality's boundaries? If so, should cost-sharing arrangements between municipalities be considered?

22. If the program is implemented, can we evaluate it for spending controls, efficiency and effectiveness?

23. Who will be responsible for evaluation, and to whom will they report?

24. Should this proposal be referred to a committee or to staff to gather additional financial information and other data necessary for informed decision-making? If so, will the committee or staff present alternatives and options to the program, and by what date can we expect a report?

25. Can we afford to have this program? Can we afford not to have it?

About the MMTDB

The Maritime Municipal Training and Development Board (MMTDB) was established as an agency of the Council of Maritime Premiers in 1974 and is mandated by the Provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island to improve administrative operations in local government. The organization and activity of this agency is unique in Canada and has helped to establish the Maritime region as a pioneer and leader in municipal management training and development. Among its many activities, the MMTDB acts as a clearing house for training and development information of current interest to municipal officials. It provides a forum for discussion of important issues, convenes problem-solving meetings, initiates and coordinates training, develops and publishes needed resources, and provides technical assistance and counsel to municipal officials on matters falling within its mandate.

The MMTDB undertakes its work in close cooperation with municipal associations, training institutions, provincial departments responsible for municipal affairs, and others concerned with upgrading the quality of local government in the region. Its record is one of accomplishment, innovation, and positive leadership.

Membership on the MMTDB is composed of elected and appointed municipal officials from the three Maritime Provinces, as well as representatives from the three departments responsible for municipal affairs, the Council of Maritime Premiers, and Maritime educational institutions.